

*Presbyters and Deacons not commis-  
sioned to preach without the Bishop's  
Allowance,*

A

## DISCOURSE

Addressed to a certain

METHODIST CLERGYMAN.

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*Not every one, that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into  
the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father,  
which is in Heaven.*

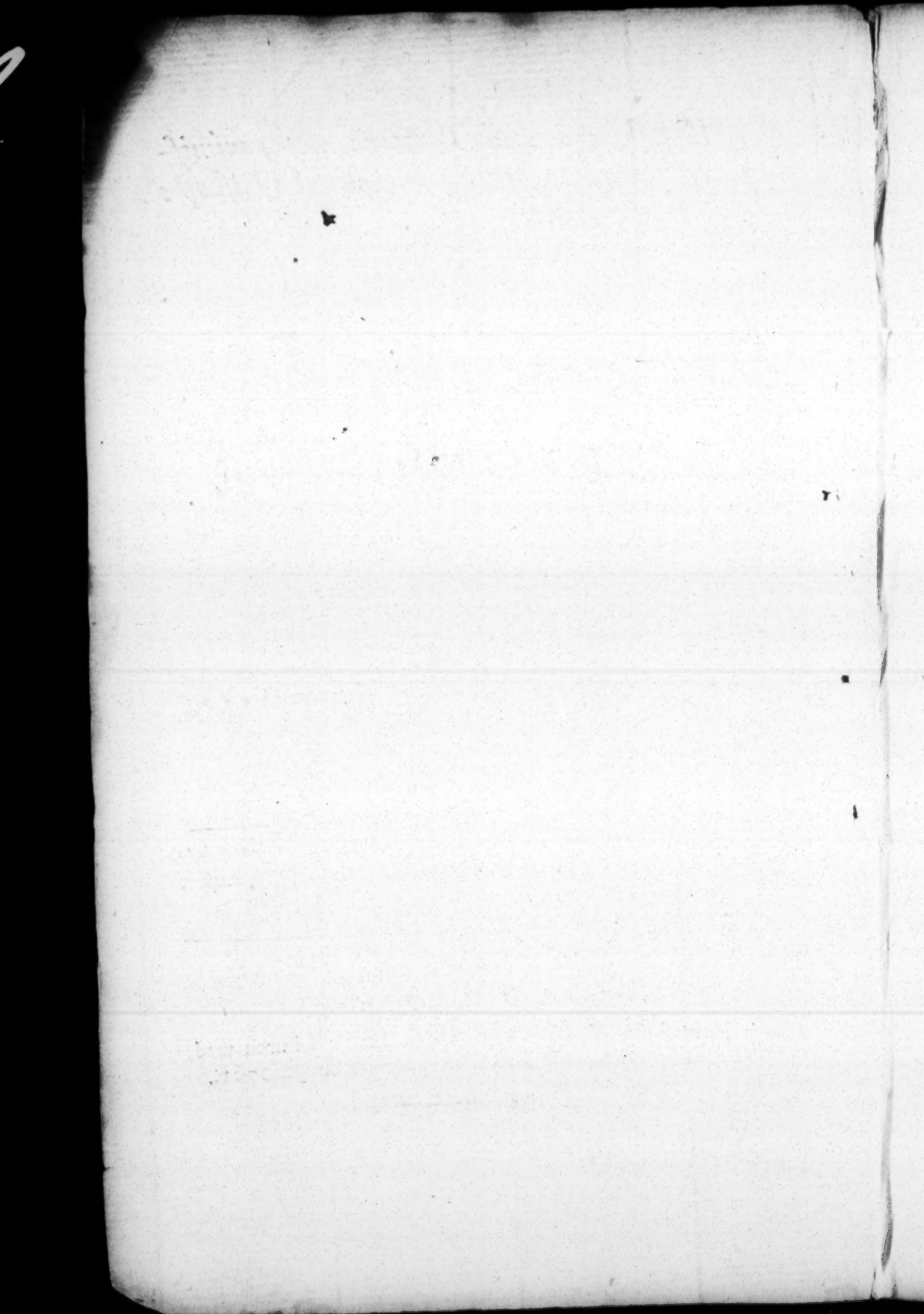
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Matt. vii. 21.

L O N D O N :

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[Price One Shilling.]



THE *d*  
P R E F A C E.

THE CLERGYMAN'S LETTER, upon which we formerly made the few remarks, we here attempt to vindicate, was chiefly occasioned, as himself informs us, by the censures passed in the *Craftsman* of the preceding Saturday, upon the peculiar tenets of the Methodist Divines, and more particularly upon the tickets, which a popular preacher had delivered to some of his followers. In this Letter he informs his *weak brethren*, " that a Clergy-  
" *man* is one who is *allotted* of God to  
" minister in holy things; — a Clergy-  
" *man* is one whose commission runs,  
" *Preach the Gospel to every creature.*" Without entering into any controversy about the *doctrines*, which had already exercised the pens of very able writers, I thought it might not be unserviceable to point out this Gentleman's mistake in *discipline*, which did not appear to me to have been hitherto sufficiently considered by others; and accordingly I attempted to shew in a few short remarks, that his last position was neither countenanced by Scripture, Antiquity, or the Church of *England*. I had no reason to apprehend, that this attempt could be dis-  
pleasing



pleasing to him, as in the close of his Letter he has thus expressed himself with relation to his adversary. " However, tho' " he doth not chuse to ask of any of them " (*the Methodists*) the way to heaven, they " are quite willing (as an evidence that " they *heartily* wish him there) to tell him " their way without asking, if he will lend " them his eyes or ears; and if he approve " it not, they are willing to hear concern- " ing his way; and one of them, who is " well persuaded that he is in the *true way*, " and the *true way* in him, is ready through " the way to reason with him concerning " the difference of their ways." After such an invitation to an adversary not overabounding in civility, who could have imagined, that a few remarks modestly proposed would have raised this Gentleman's indignation to so high a degree, as we have seen it to rise in the answer he has given to them? But herein, we beg leave to observe, we have not followed his example, not returned *railing for railing*. And tho' the truths we have delivered may perhaps prove unacceptable to him, he will be pleased to consider, that the most charitable office, which any man can shew to his neighbour, is an honest endeavour to convince him of the error of his way.





A

## VINDICATION, &amp;c.

S I R,

\* \* \* \* \* F I had not been thoroughly  
 \* I \* convinced that the principle,  
 \* \* \* which gives to every inferiour  
 \* \* \* Clergyman an unlimited Com-  
 mission to preach, was both wrong in it-  
 self, and dangerous in its Consequences, I  
 should have taken no notice of the Letter  
 you published last Year in the *London*  
*Chronicle* of *January* 1. The manifest  
 tendency of it to subvert the Order and  
 Oeconomy, which *Christ* has established in  
 the government of his Church upon Earth,  
 and the pernicious Effects, which, I had  
 reason to apprehend, might arise from it,  
 were the Motives which induced me to  
 lay before you the Remarks I caused to be  
 printed in the same *Chronicle* of *February*  
 23. These Motives still subsist; and as  
 you did not appear to have invalidated any  
 one of the Facts I there advanced, or shewn  
 any of the Reasonings to have been incon-  
 clusive,

B

clusive, in the Reply you have since made to them in the said Paper of *May* 24, and 27. I sent a Vindication of my Remarks to the Printer of the said Chronicle, towards the end of *July*, or the Beginning of *August* last, desiring he would give that also a place in his Paper. But as for Reasons which I am unacquainted with, he has after so long Expectation hitherto declined to do it, I take this Method of presenting it to you and the publick, with some Alterations and Enlargements.

The exceptionable Passage principally taken Notice of in your Letter, was thus expressed; "A Clergyman is one, whose Commission runs, *preach the Gospel to every Creature.*" Upon which I modestly inquired, where this Commission was to be found; and observed, that it could not be contained in the Commission granted by our Saviour to his Apostles, upon his leaving the world, from whence the words seemed to have been taken, because neither were all Clergymen Apostles, nor were Clergymen under the Degree of a Bishop, whom I there named private Clergymen, entrusted with a Commission of equal Extent and Authority with the Commission, which Christ had granted to his Apostles.

I farther urged, that during the Apostolick Age, whilst the Apostles remained together at *Jerusalem*, the Church was governed

verned by them conjointly; that upon the spreading of the Gospel, and their Dispersion, divers inferiour Officers were appointed by the Holy-Ghost to assist in the Work of the ministry; that these inferiour Officers were subordinate to the Apostles, and subject to their Authority, and of Course had no Right to Claim the full Powers, which our blessed Saviour had granted to the Apostles.

From thence, I proceeded to the Age immediately following, and observed that Bishops were in all Churches substituted in the Place of the Apostles, having a like Commission with that, which was originally granted to them, and having under them Presbyters and Deacons, who had a share in the discharge of the pastoral Office, in subordination to them.

These Officers, I farther observed, were retained in the Church of *England*, and plainly shewed, from the Offices of Ordination printed in our Common-Prayer Books, that Priests and Deacons were admitted to their respective Offices by limited Commissions.

I then pointed out some unhappy Consequences, which might possibly arise from the mistaken Principle of every Clergyman's having an unlimited Commission to preach, and recommended to your serious



Consideration the Effects, which so naturally flowed from it.

And now, Sir, what reply have you made to all this? You begin with telling us, that the Commission granted to the Apostles, "though given in an extraordinary Manner, was not confined to them, "as our blessed Saviour had promised to be "with them always, *even to the end of the "world*—And consequently a Clergyman, "even in the present Age, is one whose "Commission runs, *Preach the Gospel to every Creature.*" You are right, Sir, in your Premises, but wrong in your Conclusion. The Commission given by Christ was not given to the Apostles only, but to the Apostles and their Successors, with whom it will subsist, till the World shall cease to be, as the promises of Christ can never fail. But Bishops only have succeeded the Apostles in a Commission of like Authority and Extent with theirs; and consequently Bishops only are empowered by the Commission and promise, which Christ gave to his Apostles, *to preach the Gospel to every creature*, and not Clergymen in general.

Your Conjecture, which follows, that the name of Clergyman was derived from the chusing *Matthias* into the Apostleship by *Lot*, is a matter of no moment, tho' it

it were not founded upon mistake, \* as it evidently is. And your Observation upon it, that the first Clergyman was an Apostle, is equally insignificant. We will readily allow you, Sir, that all the Apostles were Clergymen, but it does not therefore follow, that all Clergymen are Apostles. All Bishops are Clergymen, but all Clergymen are not Bishops.

You go on, “ and though it be granted, “ that no Clergyman in the present Age “ is in the fullest Sense of the word an “ Apostle, yet I suppose it will be easily “ allowed every *true* Clergyman is one, who “ is allotted, moved, *sent*, not merely of “ men, but of God, to preach the Gospel; “ in this Sense, and for this End therefore, “ he is in his *measure* an Apostle, *sent* of “ God, and consequently that Part of the “ Apostolick Commission, which respects “ Preaching, must belong to him.” An unlimited authority to preach is the Point in question, and what reason can be assigned, why every Clergyman should be entitled to that part of the Apostolical Commission, which respects preaching, and not to the rest? The Commission granted by our Lord to his Apostles, joined to his Promise of *being with them always, even to the end of the world*, can imply no less, than that there should be *always* a Succession of Gospel Mi-

\* See Bingham's Antiquities, &c, Book i. Chap. 5.

nisters,

nisters, invested with resembling Powers to those, which he had granted to them, and continuing *to the end of the world*. Either then there must be some Church-Officers in the present Age succeeding in the place of the Apostles, or Christ's promise must not have been fulfilled; and to these Officers alone belongs the ordinary *fullness* of the Apostolick Commission. Inferiour Officers, Priests and Deacons, *sent* by these, have by God's Appointment such a share in the Ministrations of the Gospel, as has been committed to them by these superior Officers, who have succeeded to the Apostles. These, and these only, since extraordinary Missions (which were ever attended with miraculous Powers) have ceased in the Church, are *true* Clergymen, sent to minister in the Church by the proper Officers empowered by Christ to send them, and whose Commissions are *not merely of Men, but of God*, as they are given by those Men, who have received Authority from God to give them in his Name. But as distinct Offices necessarily imply distinct Commissions, all inferiour Clergymen are excluded from the ordinary Execution of all Powers, which are not contained within the Bounds of the Commission, that has been by God's Appointment granted to them by their superior Officers, or Bishops.

And



And here I beg leave to take notice, that you misrepresent my Opinion, if you suppose, that I do not allow *preaching* in some *measure* to belong to all Clergymen. I have shewn that it does, but under such Limitations and Restrictions, as their several Commissions express, and the Laws of the Church require. It is the pretension to an unlimited Commission to preach, contrary to all Order and Rule, which I esteem an unjustifiable Principle, and which I think it the duty of every *Christian* to oppose.

Your next Paragraph is directed against the expression *private Clergymen*, which you have wrested to a different Sense from what was intended, and must have *wilfully* mistaken, as from the whole Tenour of the Discourse, it could evidently signify nothing more than *Clergymen under the Degree of a Bishop*. Is this proceeding fair? Is it consistent with the *Christian* sincerity you profess? It has supplied you indeed with an Opportunity of indulging, your Talent of Railing, which you have very liberally employed against the Clergy of the Church of *England*, both of the higher and lower Orders. Your Reproaches, I hope, are in many respects ill-grounded; but whether they be just or not, they are foreign to the present purpose; and not only so, but the concluding Sentence in the first Part of your Invective, is a direct contradiction

tradition to the 26th Article of the Church of *England*, which I suppose you must have subscribed.

I had observed, that whilst the Apostles remained together at *Jerusalem*, they managed the affairs of the Church conjointly. To this you reply, "How far, or in what  
 " Sense, this may be true or false with respect to the *temporal* Affairs of the Church,  
 " I am not at present called upon to consider; the Point under Consideration, is the  
 " preaching of the everlasting Gospel;  
 " and that I am bold to say, neither was,  
 " nor is under the Management of Man or  
 " Men, but under the sole Direction of  
 " the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls,  
 " through the powerful Influence of his  
 " blessed Spirit." Who ever imagined, that the Apostles acted by their own Authority, or managed the Affairs of the Church, without the Direction of our blessed Saviour? But are not the Dispensations of God conveyed to us by the Hands of Men? The Apostles \* governed the Church by Christ's Appointment, and received the Holy Ghost with their Commission. During the Period assigned they governed it conjointly, and the Communication of the Holy Spirit went along with their Administration. Be pleased to read over the eight first Chapters of the Acts of the A-

\* Joh. xx. 21, 22.

postles, which contain the History of the Church from the Ascension of our blessed Saviour, to the time of the Apostles departure from *Jerusalem*, and you will find, that all *ecclesiastical* affairs, whereof preaching the Gospel was a considerable part, were carried on by the joint labours and direction of the *twelve*, the Holy Ghost co-operating with them, and rendering their Ministrations effectal. Our blessed Saviour is undoubtedly, in the strictest sense, sole Head of the Church. He governed it in Person whilst upon earth, and when he left the World he committed the Care of it to his Apostles and their Successors as his Vicegerents, \* promising *to be with them* in their ministry *to the End of the World*. And here it may be proper to observe, that our blessed Lord took not himself upon him the Office of preaching, 'till he had been externally † appointed by the visible Descent of the Holy Ghost at his Baptism. In like manner he ‡ first chose *twelve*, and amongst these the Traytor *Judas*, whom he named Apostles, and sent forth by a special commission to *preach* the Gospel throughout *Judea*. Some time after he appointed other *seventy* also, || whom he sent with a more limited Commission *before his Face into every City and Place, whither he*

\* Matt. xxvii. 20. † Matt. iii. 16, 17. iv. 17. Heb. v. 4, 5. ‡ Matt. x. 1—8. Luke x. 1—7. || Luke x. 1.



*himself should come.* But without an external Commission we read not, that any of his disciples ever presumed to preach. Upon his resurrection, \* *when all Power was given to him in Heaven and in Earth*, his first Act was to enlarge the Powers he had before granted to his Apostles, and to confer upon them a like Commission with that, which he himself had received from the Father; *As my Father, † saith he, has sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive the Holy Ghost.* This Commission was not like the former confined to Judea, but extended to the utmost Corners of the Earth, ‡ *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations*, or, which amounts to the same thing, § *Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, to Gentiles, as well as Jews. And accordingly § *they went forth, and preached every where.* To assist them in the discharge of this Commission, our blessed Lord before his Ascension, \* renewed his Promise of sending to them the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, † *who should guide them into all truth.* And thus we find, that their first entrance upon the Office of *preaching* was after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the day of Pentecost, ‡ *when Peter standing up*

\* Matt. xxviii. 18. † John xx. 21, 22. ‡ Matt. xxviii. 19. § Mark xvi. 15. § Mark xvi. 20. \* Acts i. 4, 5. † John xvi. 13. ‡ Acts ii. 15.

with the *Eleven* preached to the People: And from this time forward, assisted by the Holy Ghost, they in Conjunction managed the Affairs of the Church, whilst they remained together at *Jerusalem*. And when upon their separation, the world was divided among them, they were enabled by the same Holy Spirit to govern the respective Districts committed to their Charge. They planted Churches, set Rulers over them, appointed subordinate Ministers, made Laws, and exercised other Acts of spiritual jurisdiction, by the assistance of the same Spirit. The assistances of the Holy Ghost did not supersede their Commission, or disannull the Powers, which Christ gave them at the same time, that he gave them the Holy Ghost. These subsisted in their full force, and the assistances given by the Holy Ghost confirmed the Commission they had received from Christ. In cases extraordinary, they were directed by the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner. At other times they were manifestly guided by their own Judgment. *St. Paul* \* made it a Rule, not to preach where others had preached before him, that *he might not build upon another mans foundation*, and yet, as he tells us, *he preached the Gospel fully from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum*. And that they

\* Rom. xv. 19, 20.

were ordinarily left to their own choice, \* does not only appear from many passages of Scripture, but may be gathered from the very instance, which you have produced of the Spirits not suffering *Paul* and *Timothy* to preach the Word in *Bitbynia*; for otherwise there could have been no occasion for a special prohibition to preach in particular places, as it would have been enough, that the Holy Ghost had not commanded it.

As the Gospel encreased, and more Labourers became necessary, it pleased the Holy Ghost, as I have before observed, to appoint divers other Officers to assist in the Work of the Ministry. These were some of them ordinary, others extraordinary, but all of them inferiour to the Apostles. † So St. *Paul*, God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles; secondarily, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers. Prophets and Teachers therefore, though many of them men inspired, and excelling in the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, were notwithstanding subordinate to the Apostles, as the first Order of Ministers was the Order of Apostles.

It was further observed, that the Churches planted by each particular Apostle, were governed by him as a district Province, though all in general had a common concern for the whole Church, and were still subject to the College of Apostles; and pur-

\* See Acts xi. 25, 26. xv. 39. 41. † 1 Cor. xii. 28.  
fuant



suant to this observation it was said, that St. Paul, who had converted the *Corinthians*, claimed an Authority over them above all other Teachers whatsoever. In reply to this we are asked, " what Authority? Doth " he enjoin them to hear no one preach " but himself, or such, whom he shall " depute?" No one certainly, but such as \* followed him, and kept the Ordinances, which he had delivered unto them. The Passage referr'd to is this, † For tho' you have ten thousand Instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotton you through the Gospel. Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithfull in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my Ways, which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every Church. Does he not here claim an Authority over them, as their only Father? Does he not in the plainest terms injoin them to be followers of him? Did he not send *Timothy* for this very purpose, that he might inform them in what manner they should follow him, by bringing to their remembrance his ways in Christ, the Instructions which he alone would have them pursue, and which he continued to give every where in every Church? Can terms be more exprefs? And does he not in the

\* 1. Cor. xi. 1, 2. † 1 Cor. iv. 15, 16, 17.

words immediately following still farther assert his authority by threatening to punish the disobedient, who should attempt to gainsay it? \* *Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come unto you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which be puffed up, but the Power. For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in Power. What will ye? shall I come unto you with a Rod?*

“Nay verily,” say you, “he tells them, “that whether *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or *Cephas*, “all are yours.” The whole Passage stands thus; † *Therefore let no man glory in Men, for all are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, or Things present, or Things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Now, Sir, what consequence favourable to your scheme can you draw from these words? Did *Cephas*, or *Apollos*, preach to the *Corinthians* in opposition to the Authority of *St. Paul*? They evidently did not. What then? Why, though *Timothy* might be deputed by *St. Paul*, say you, it is plain, that *Apollos* was not. “—Here then is a plain undeniable instance of a Preacher of the Gospel, who “hitherto was neither managed, nor directed, either by a particular Apostle, or “the whole College of Apostles together.”

\* 1 Cor. vi. 18, 19, 20, 21. † 1. Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23.

How far *Apollos*, as a Preacher of the Gospel to the *Corinthians*, was, or was not, managed or directed by the Apostles, does by no means appear from Scripture. St. Paul \* terms him a *Minister*, by whom they believed. From whence we may justly conclude that he was a joint-labourer with him in their conversion. But whether herein he acted in a publick or in a private capacity, the Scripture is silent. St. Paul does not call him a *Minister of Christ*, as you have misquoted him, but simply a *minister*, or Agent, by whom they believed. In the infancy of the Gospel, many Conversions were wrought by private persons. And it is one thing to make Converts to Christianity, and to convince the unbelieving † *Jews*, by Arguments and Testimonies drawn from Scripture, that *Jesus* was the *Messiah*, which every private man might do, and is all that appears from Scripture to have been done by *Apollos*, and another to preach the Gospel authoritatively in a publick Congregation. *Apollos* himself ‡ learnt the way of God more perfectly from the Instructions of *Aquila* and *Priscilla* his Wife. And though no || Woman can have Authority to preach the Gospel in a settled Congregation, yet was *Priscilla* in the lan-

\* 1. Cor. iii. 5. † Acts xviii. 28. ‡ *Ibid.* v. 26. || 1 Cor. xiv. 34.



guage of *St. Paul* one of the *Ministers*, by whom *Apollos* believed.

But let us suppose, that *Apollos* was a *Minister of Christ* in the common acceptation of the Word, and an authorized *Preacher of the Gospel* in the Church of *Corinth*; he must in this case have had a Mission to preach, either ordinary or extraordinary. For, as \* *St. Paul* argues, *How can they preach, except they be sent?* If his Mission was ordinary, he must have been appointed either by some other Apostle, or by *St. Paul*, who, though absent from *Ephesus* at the time, when *Apollos* departed thence for *Achaia*, might have concurred with the Brethren, who had recommended him, and supported their recommendation by a future appointment. And though it be not recorded expressly in the place you refer to, that he had a Commission either from *St. Paul*, or any other Apostle, the silence of the Scripture alone does not afford a sufficient argument to disprove it. *Timothy* is in one place † said to have been ordained by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, without any mention made of *St. Paul's* concurrence in his Ordination; and yet we ‡ learn from *St. Paul's* second Epistle to him, that this Gift was conferred on him by the putting on of *St. Paul's* own Hands. And that this might

\* Rom. x. 15. † 1. Tim. iv. 14. ‡ 2. Tim. i. 6.

be the case with respect to *Apollos*, we have the more reason to believe, as we have the express \* testimony of *St. Clement* of *Rome*, a writer beyond all exception, who was himself familiarly conversant both with *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, that *Apollos* was a person approved by them; † which is an usual expression with *St. Clement* to denote such persons as were appointed to be officers of the church, either by the Apostles themselves, or by their direction.

If the mission of *Apollos* was extraordinary, then must he have been one of those inspired persons, who, as I before observed, upon the spreading of the gospel, were appointed by the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner to assist in the ministry, and a plain instance of their ‡ inferiority and subordination to the Apostles.

In churches lately planted, and not thoroughly settled, it was customary with *St. Paul* to defer the ordaining of fixed ministers, till such time as he had made a second visit to confirm them. || Thus when with *Barnabas* he returned again to *Lystra*, and to *Iconium*, and to *Antioch*, \* they confirmed

\* *Clem. Rom. Ep. ad Corinth. cap. 47. p. 188. ed. Cantab. 1718.* † *Ibid. cap. 42. p. 170. et cap. 48. p. 176.*

‡ At the time this epistle was wrote, *Apollos* was an attendant upon *St. Paul*, who was minded to have sent him to *Corinth* upon the same errand with *Timothy*; but *Apollos* declined it, as judging the time inconvenient. *1. Cor. xvi. 12.*

|| *Act. xiv. 21. 22. 23.*

*the souls of the disciples, and ordained them elders in every city, which they had not before. And hence it was, that in the church of Corinth, which was not yet formed into a regular church, all religious offices were performed by prophets and gifted teachers, and, as we learn from this very epistle, sometimes very irregularly. 'Twas this situation, which gave occasion to certain men of turbulent dispositions to question the Apostleship of St. Paul; and hence it was, that he lay under a necessity of asserting his authority, which he abundantly made good by proving his right to the Apostleship, and in consequence to all the powers, which belonged to an Apostle who had converted them, and to a superiority over all other teachers among the rest.*

But does not St. Paul, say you, \* plainly tell the *Philippians*, that though some were encouraged by his sufferings to *preach Christ* with greater boldness, and others had preached him out of envy and strife, thro' contention and not sincerely, *notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or truth, as Christ was preached, he therein rejoiced.* And would you, Sir, from hence conclude, that if Christ be preached, it matters not by whom he is preached? Does St. Paul hereby approve the *preaching Christ* out of envy and strife? He surely does not. But

\* Phil. i. 14.



if in the course of his providence it shall please God to turn the evil purposes of wicked men to the advantage of his Church, has not every good man reason with St. *Paul* to rejoice?

You go on, "since then the Apostle  
 " *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that all the  
 " ministers of Christ are theirs; since he  
 " informs them (1. Cor. xii. 14.) *that tho'*  
 " *they have diversities of gifts, yet it is the*  
 " *same spirit, who hath given them for the*  
 " *perfecting of the Saints, for the edification*  
 " *of the body of Christ: (Eph. iv. 12.)*  
 " since therefore he permits them to enjoy,  
 " not only the wisdom of a *Paul*, but also  
 " the plainness of *Cephas*, and eloquence of  
 " *Apollos*; since he even rejoices because  
 " Christ is preached, whether in pretence  
 " or truth; it is clear to a demonstration,  
 " that the Apostle claims no such Lordship  
 " over their faith, as to forbid them to hear  
 " any minister of Christ, because not de-  
 " puted by him." The first and last of  
 these allegations we have considered already. But why do you alter the terms I made use of? My words were, "that St.  
 " *Paul* claimed an authority over the *Co-*  
 " *rinthians* above all teachers;" your's are,  
 " that St. *Paul* claims no such Lordship  
 " over their faith, as to forbid them to  
 " hear any minister of Christ, because not  
 " deputed by him." Are these expressions  
 of

of the same import? Or, what do you mean, Sir, by *Lordship over their faith*? Did the Apostles permit their disciples to think and act as they thought fit, or to follow whom they pleased? Or could he be either a *minister of Christ*, or in the *true way*, who did not steadfastly adhere to their doctrine and fellowship? The claim assigned to St. Paul has been already made good, and will be farther confirmed by the consideration of the two following passages in St. Paul's epistles to the *Corinthians* and *Ephesians*, which you have thus joined together; "he informs them (1. Cor. xii. 4.) "that though they have diversities of gifts, "yet it is the same spirit, who hath given "them for the perfecting of the Saints, for "the edification of the body of Christ." (Eph. iv. 12.) The Apostles design in the first passage is to inform the *Corinthians*, that though the gifts of the spirit were imparted to divers persons, yet these were not only different in power, but subordinate in degree. He lets them know, that the Church was a well-regulated society, a body consisting of several members united to Christ the head, by the intermediate union of one member to another, and the mutual discharge of the several functions allotted to each of them. \**Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily*

\* 1 Cor. xii. 21. 28.

*prophets,*

*prophets, thirdly teachers ; after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all Apostles? The first in order were Apostles, appointed to govern by a special commission from Christ, to whom all others were bound to be subject however distinguished ; next to these were prophets, and after them teachers, who had each of them divers spiritual graces communicated to them by the same spirit ; but still they were administrations distinct from the Apostleship, different in powers, and limited in the use of them, which notwithstanding contributed conjointly to the support and subsistence of the whole, whilst each particular member supplied the office that was assigned him, without intruding into the province of another, or making a division in the body, one principal end of their appointment being, \* that there might be no schism in the body. Can you after this, Sir, question St. Paul's authority to govern the Church of *Corinth* above all other teachers ? Or can you not acknowledge, that it is the duty of inferior ministers to confine themselves within the limits of their proper commission ? To the same purpose in the passage referred to in the Epistle to the *Ephesians* the Apostle † tells us, that *Christ gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and tea-**

\* *Ibid.* v. 25. † Eph. iv. 11, 12, 16.

*chers,*



chers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ—From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. The members of the Church are united to Christ the head, by being united to the proper officers, whom Christ has appointed to supply his place upon earth; and thus being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which these joints supply, they make an increase of the body to edification: the vital influence of the Holy Spirit being communicated to each particular member, whilst by adhering to his proper pastor he maintains the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

“But just so,” that is, in the same words with St. *Paul*, you say, “could *Philip* the Deacon have said to the Eunuch, to the believers at *Azotus*, or to any other Church, which in a ministerial sense was planted by him.” Indeed he could not. The power claimed by St. *Paul*, was a power Apostolical. And there is a manifest difference between Churches planted by Apostles and by inferior ministers. *Philip*, though an inspired preacher and an evangelist, exercised only a limited power, subordinate to the authority of the Apostles.

His

His conversions were incomplete, till they had been confirmed by the Apostles, \* who, hearing of his success in *Samaria*, sent thither *Peter* and *John*, to supply what was wanting in him by giving the Holy Ghost, to which *Philip's* powers did not extend.

“Just so,” you add, “may any minister of Christ even now say to those, who have under his ministry been awakened out of the sleep of nature and savingly brought to Jesus Christ; wheresoever they were born, bred, or dwell; and not only so, but to an assembly of this kind, I readily allow, he may so speak, as no other human teacher can whatsoever.” All ecclesiastical power must be derived either from an ordinary or an extraordinary commission. In a church regularly formed, no minister can have any power as a minister of that church, but what he is allowed to exercise by his ordinary commission. Nor can any subordinate minister now take upon him the exercise of the Apostolical power here claimed and administered by *St. Paul*, without transgressing the bounds of his commission, and invading the prerogatives and jurisdiction of his superiour officers. Or, if any minister shall now pretend to act by an extraordinary commission, he must first

\* Act. viii. 14. *seq.*

prove his right to it, by producing proper evidence to shew that he is inspired, before his pretensions can be justly admitted. St. *Paul* presumed not to claim the authority he exercised over the *Corinthians*, 'till by the miracles he wrought he had given full proof both of his general commission, and his right to discharge the duties of it towards them. *For in nothing, \* says he, am I behind the very chiefest Apostles. Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*

Having now fully considered, and answered every thing material, that you have urged from scripture, let us proceed to the judgment and practice of the primitive Church in the ages immediately following the death of the Apostles, which you very disrespectfully call the *vast and perplexing wilderness of human traditions*. Yet you have told us, that the commission given by Christ to his Apostles did not expire with them; and if not, it must have extended to their successors; and how should we learn, who these were, or what powers they exercised, but from the early Fathers and antient Bishops of the Church, who living near to the Apostles times, and deriving their commissions from them, could not be mistaken in point of fact, and whose integrity and zeal for truth must

\* 2 Cor. xii. 11, 12.



exempt them from every the least suspicion of fraud or falshood: Contemptible, Sir, as they may appear to you, there is no Christian community of any note now in the world, however they may have deviated from it in practice, which has not declared themselves disposed to acquiesce in their judgment. The reformed Churches in general have all done it. And what may more immediately concern you, every Preacher in the Church of England is required by Canon to conform to their sentiments, and to adapt his discourses to the doctrine, which they have taught. The words of the \* Canon are these. *Preachers shall in the first place take heed, that they never teach any thing in a sermon, which they would have to be religiously observed and believed by the people, but what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and which the Catholick Fathers and ancient Bishops have collected from that very doctrine.* The Church of England receives with all due reverence the divine authority of Holy Scripture, but allows no doctrine to be scriptural, or necessary to be believed, but the doctrine gathered from scripture by the primitive fathers.

\* Imprimis vero videbunt (*concionatores,*) ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod à populo religiose teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ veteris aut novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina catholici patres et veteres Episcopi collegerint. *Sparrow's Collection of Articles, Injunctions, Canons, &c.* ed. 4<sup>o</sup>. 1684. p. 237.

I observed, that upon the demise of the Apostles Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons were found to be the established rulers in all Churches; that Bishops were supreme Governours under Christ, and Presbyters and Deacons subordinate ministers and subject to them. And to confirm this observation, let me now add, \* that these distinct orders are expressly declared by the Church of *England* to have been in the Church of Christ from the time of the Apostles, and † appointed by God. As to preaching in particular, I shewed from ‡ Mr. *Bingham*, that in the primitive Church it was principally held to be the Bishop's office, and that when Presbyters preached, they preached by the Bishops authority and commission, who had power, when they saw just reason to forbid it, to limit or withdraw their commission again. To this point after some few reflexions, which serve only to shew your disposition to *speakevil of dignities*, you thus object, "Doth  
" not he (Mr. *Bingham*) in the very book  
" and chapter quoted by Mr. N. N. intro-  
" duce St. *Jerom* asking this question,  
" *What is it that a Bishop has more than a*  
" *Presbyter, setting aside the business of Or-*

\* The Preface to the *Form of Consecration and Ordinations* begins thus. *It is evident to all men diligently reading holy Scripture and antient Authors, that from the Apostles time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.*

† See the Collect for each particular office.

‡ *Bingham's Antiquities*, &c. Book ii. chap. 3. sect. 4.

" *ordination?*

“ dination? And at the same time doth he  
 “ not tell us, that *St. Chrysostom* speaks to  
 “ the same purpose, *Bishops are superiour to*  
 “ *them only in the power of ordaining, and*  
 “ *have that one thing more than they?* If  
 “ they have only that one thing more than  
 “ they, then it is plain, that a Presbyter  
 “ *as such* hath a power to preach as ex-  
 “ tensive as that of a Bishop, and is not  
 “ occasionally entrusted therewith; conse-  
 “ quently Mr. N. N. must either have mis-  
 “ represented Mr. *Bingham*, or, Mr. *Bing-*  
 “ *ham* must have contradicted himself.”  
 It is plain, Sir, that when you wrote this,  
 you had Mr. *Bingham's* book before your  
 eyes, and must know that I had not mis-  
 represented him. This insinuation therefore  
 is highly disingenuous. Your charge too  
 against Mr. *Bingham* is mere calumny. He  
 has in no wise contradicted himself, and  
 you must know it. For granting with *St.*  
*Jerom* and *St. Chrysostom*, that the common  
 offices of a Bishop, excepting ordination,  
 were ordinarily entrusted in the hands of  
 Presbyters, yet has \* Mr. *Bingham* shewn  
 beyond all contradiction this obvious dif-  
 ference to have been betwixt a Bishop and  
 a Presbyter, “ that the one acted by an ab-  
 “ solute and independent power, the other  
 “ in dependance upon and subordination  
 “ to his Bishop; by whose authority and

\* Ibid. sect. 1, 2.



“ directions under God he was to be go-  
 “ verned, and do nothing without his con-  
 “ sent or against it; so that tho’ there was  
 “ no difference in the things that were  
 “ done, yet there was an essential diffe-  
 “ rence in the *power* of doing them.”

And hence it will be easy to give an answer to what you have farther urged upon this subject. For if Presbyters are by their original institution subordinate to their Bishops, as they certainly are, and by their office obliged to act dependently upon them, then cannot Presbyters *as such* have a commission from God either to preach the word, or administer the Sacraments, in opposition to the authority of their Bishops. Every attempt of this kind, however varnished over with specious pretences, would in the antient Church have been censured as an act of spiritual rebellion, a resisting the ordinance of Christ, who has entrusted the chief governors of his Church with superior powers, and placed Presbyters in a state of subjection under them. Nor will it avail to object, as you do, that *the gifts and callings of God with respect to his elect are without repentance*. For no Presbyter administering divine ordinances in opposition to the lawful authority of his Bishop can be rightly accounted one of God’s *elect*, whilst he wilfully perseveres in the  
 open

open transgression of God's commandment. *Behold to obey, \* says the prophet to King Saul, when he had offered to God an unauthorized worship, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.*

Let us now come to the judgment and practice of the Church of *England*. I observed, that Priests and Deacons were admitted to their respective orders by limited commissions, and referred to the offices of Ordination in our Common-Prayer Books for a proof of it. To descend to particulars. In the office of Ordering Deacons the words of the commission are very clear. *Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself.* From whence the inference is easy, that without the Bishop's licence he is not commissioned to preach at all. In the office of Ordering Priests the concluding clause of the commission is equally express. *Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments, in the congregation, where thou shall be lawfully appointed thereunto.* From whence it no less naturally follows, that the exercise of the Priests commis-

\* 1 Sam. xv, 22, 23.

sion is limited to the congregation, whereunto he shall be lawfully appointed.

In your answer to this we are first told,  
 “ that a *true* minister of Christ, be he  
 “ called a Deacon, Presbyter or Priest,  
 “ hath a commission to preach before the  
 “ Bishop and elders give him any at all;  
 “ a commission so necessary, that without  
 “ it all others are nothing worth; and  
 “ therefore as a previous question the  
 “ Bishop asks, *Do you trust, that you are*  
 “ *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take*  
 “ *upon you this office and ministration to serve*  
 “ *God for the promoting of his glory, and*  
 “ *the edifying of the people?* This commis-  
 “ sion given him by the chief shepherd  
 “ and bishop of Souls, as we have already  
 “ proved, extends to every man.” But  
 where, Sir, do you learn, or how have you  
 proved, that our blessed Saviour has given  
 to every *true* minister, or to any minister,  
 a twofold commission? Or, by what au-  
 thority do you so boldly pronounce, that a  
 commission given by Christ’s Vice-gerent,  
 without a prior commission from Christ  
 himself, is *nothing worth*? Or, whence  
 does it appear, that every Priest and Dea-  
 con has a commission from Christ of uni-  
 versal extent, before he receives a limited  
 one from the Bishop? These, Sir, are  
 strange positions, unwarranted by scripture,  
 and plainly repugnant to the doctrine of  
 the



the Church of *England*, for whose judgment you still profess to retain a regard. The Church of *England* acknowledges no commission, except that which is given by the Bishop; and every commission given by the Bishop is held by the Church to be a valid commission, though given to unworthy ministers, whose ministrations are directly affirmed by her 36th article to be *effectual*, though administered by evil men. In the 23d article we are plainly taught, that *it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of publick preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same; and those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men, who have publick authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into Christ's vineyard.* And in the preface to the offices of Consecration and Ordination 'tis expressly declared, *that no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tryed, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly episcopal Consecration or Ordination.* 'Tis not enough to be tryed, called, and examined, but he must be admitted by Episcopal Consecration or Ordination,

dination, before he can be accounted a *true minister of Christ* in the judgment of the Church. The previous questions put by the Bishop, upon which you would seem to ground the shadow of an argument, are proper enquiries into the qualifications of persons to be ordained; but no qualifications can empower any man to take upon him any office or ministration in the Church, 'till he has received a commission from those men, who are authorized by God to give it. Can you not distinguish, Sir, between an inward motion to undertake an office, and an actual commission to execute it? The seven Deacons, who were first chosen into that office, the lowest office in the ministry, were men full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, and properly qualified *according to the will of Jesus Christ to take the office upon them*; and yet they presumed not to take it upon them, 'till they had been outwardly commissioned by the laying on of the Apostles hands.

You go on, “ and agreeable to this  
 “ commission, the desire of every true mi-  
 “ nister of Christ is consistent with the  
 “ pious and catholick prayers of our Church  
 “ in the Ember Weeks, as much as possi-  
 “ ble lieth in him, both *by his life and*  
 “ *doctrine to set forward the salvation of*  
 “ *all*

“ *all men.*” And again, “ she (the Church)  
 “ believes that his commission extends to  
 “ all; otherwise how could she pray in  
 “ faith, that by life and doctrine *be may*  
 “ *set forward the salvation of all.*” This  
 petition must be understood in a sense con-  
 sistent with the preceding part of the  
 prayer, and the offices of the Church to  
 which it refers. Instead of the previous  
 commission from Christ of universal extent,  
 to which against all reason you say it is a-  
 greeable, the prayer supposes that the per-  
 sons to be ordained have as yet received no  
 commission whatsoever; for it would be  
 absurd to pray, that *God would guide and*  
*govern the minds of the Bishops faithfully and*  
*wisely to make choice of fit persons to serve*  
*in the sacred ministry of the Church,* if they  
 had already received a commission from  
 Christ, appointing them to execute their  
 several ministerial offices without restric-  
 tion. The design of the petition is to beg  
 a blessing from God upon those, who are  
 to be admitted into Holy Orders accord-  
 ing to the form of Ordination used by  
 the Church, and cannot be intended to im-  
 ply a greater extent of power, than is given  
 to each particular Order by the offices of  
 Ordination. But as this power is limited in  
 the commissions given to Priests and Dea-  
 cons, the petition must be interpreted in a  
 manner agreeable thereunto. And is there



no way, whereby a Clergyman may *by his life and doctrine set forward the salvation of mankind* in general, but by trampling under foot the most sacred obligations, by invading the functions of other Clergymen, and opening a door for a separate congregation? Or can he be properly supposed in any wise *to set forward the salvation of mankind by his life and doctrine*, whose doctrine subverts the order which Christ has established, and whose *life* is a constant example of disobedience to those superiors, whom God and his own vows have obliged him to obey?

You urge as a second objection, “ that  
 “ the person ordained upon the exhibition  
 “ of his Letters of Orders, with the con-  
 “ sent of the settled preacher, hath also by  
 “ the 50th Canon the Bishop’s authority to  
 “ preach to any Congregation in his Dio-  
 “ cese ;” and as a third, “ that if the per-  
 “ son ordained has a call to settle in any  
 “ particular Congregation, then the Bishop  
 “ gives him his Letters of Licence, where-  
 “ by he is empowered not only as a settled  
 “ preacher to officiate, but also to demand  
 “ his annual salary.” The Canons of the  
 Church of *England* are in all respects con-  
 formable to the articles and publick offices  
 of the Church, as above recited. No in-  
 ferior Clergyman is allowed by these Ca-  
 nons to preach to any congregation with-  
 out

out the leave of his superiours. By the Canons passed in Convocation in 1571, it is expressly provided, \* *that no minister shall preach publickly even in his own Parish without the Bishops permission; nor any where else, unless by a special license from the Crown, the Archbishop of the province, or the Bishop of the Diocese.* The 50th Canon made in the year 1603, and referred to by yourself, is full to the same purpose, tho' somewhat misrepresented by you. † *The Minister, Church-wardens, and other Officers of the Church shall suffer no one to preach either in their Churches or Chapels, unless by producing their licences to preach, they shall be found to be properly authorized to discharge that office.* The person ordained, you see, by this Canon must exhibit his *License to preach*, and not his *Letters of Orders*, before he can be admitted to preach in any Congregation within the Diocese. And yet, even according to your own representation, as the person ordained acts by the Bishop's authority, and of course is *lawfully appointed*, there is no-

\* Nemo nisi ab Episcopo permissus in Parochia sua publice prædicabit, nec postea audebit concionari extra ministerium & Ecclesiam suam, nisi potestatem ita concionandi acceperit, vel a Regia Majestate per omnes regni partes, vel ab Archiepiscopo per provinciam, vel ab Episcopo per diocesim. *Sparrow's Collection of Articles, Injunctions, &c.* p. 237. edit. 1684.

† Minister, Oeconomus, alique Ecclesie officarii, neminem patientur in suis Ecclesiis aut Capellis concionari, nisi qui, Licentiis suis ad prædicandum exhibitis, iusta auctoritate in eam partem muniri comperientur. *Ibid* p. 292.

thing in this case either inconsistent with the words of the several offices of ordination, or the inferences which I drew from them. And the same may be said of the following instance alledged in your third objection.

I farther confirmed the conclusion I drew from the words of the commission by observing, that this commission was not given till after the Priest to be ordained had made a solemn vow *by the help of God reverently to obey his Ordinary, and other chief ministers, unto whom the government and charge over him is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, and submitting himself to their godly judgments.* To this you reply, " True, but " not to their *ungodly* judgments." And you say right. For should a Bishop command the transgression of any divine law, the disbelief of any article of Faith, or the non-performance of any moral duty, the answer would be easy, *We must obey God rather than man.* But is it an *ungodly judgment* to injoyn obedience to the rules of discipline, which have ever subsisted in the Church from the earliest ages of Christianity? Is it an *ungodly judgment* to require a subordinate minister to keep within the just bounds of his proper station, and not intrude into the province of his brethren? The Canons of the Church of *England*, as  
we



we have seen, allow no inferior Minister to preach without the Bishop's leave. Are these Canons *ungodly* injunctions, or is it an *ungodly judgment* in the Ordinary to enforce the observance of them? I urged not any compliance with an *ungodly judgment*. My words were these, " Supposing then, that  
 " a private Priest, mistaking his character,  
 " and presuming upon an unlimited commission to preach, should contrary to the  
 " known will of his Bishop, and the *discipline* established in the Church from the  
 " first foundation of Christianity, gather  
 " to himself a congregation out of the several flocks committed to the charge  
 " of other Clergymen *lawfully* appointed,  
 " would not the Clergyman acting thus  
 " exceed the bounds of the commission  
 " given in the Ordering of a Priest? Would  
 " not the several ministrations he performs  
 " in such a congregation be so many acts  
 " of disobedience to his Bishop, so many  
 " express violations of the solemn engagements he entered into at his ordination,  
 " and so many breaches of the *discipline* of  
 " the Church, which every Clergyman is  
 " bound so strictly to observe? " The admonition of the Ordinary to a Priest thus offending is a *godly* admonition. It is the proper discharge of his episcopal office, by which he is impowered to *revoke* and *exhort*  
 every

every offender of what rank soever within the limits of his jurisdiction *with all authority*. And here, Sir, as you profess yourself a member of the Church of *England*, give me leave to ask, whether every Pastor of a settled congregation in the Church of *England*, regularly instituted and inducted, is not lawfully *sent* to minister in the same? Whether the care of souls in that congregation thus *lawfully* committed to him does not give him a rightful claim to the obedience of his flock? Whether any other can *lawfully* assume a pastoral care over any part of the said flock, without his consent, and against the authority of the Ordinary, or withdraw them from the obedience they owe to their *lawful* Pastor? Whether therefore any Clergyman gathering to himself a congregation out of the several flocks thus *lawfully* committed to the care of other Pastors, contrary to the known will and *godly* admonition of his Ordinary, to whom he has vowed obedience, does not by so doing usurp the discharge of a ministerial office not *lawfully* committed to him, invade the rights and functions of other Pastors *lawfully* appointed, and directly break the vows and engagements he entered into at his Ordination? And consequently, whether I had not reason to ask, if a Clergyman acting thus could possibly be either  
in

in the *true way* himself, or the *true way* in him?

If we enquire into the sense of Scripture concerning the validity of an *internal* call without an *outward* commission, we shall find it exactly consonant to the Articles and Offices of the Church of *England*. That our blessed Saviour and his Apostles did not take upon them the ministerial office, till they were *outwardly* called and commissioned to execute it, we have already shewn; and yet no personal qualifications were wanting on their part previous to the commission they received. To which let me add the words of *St. Paul*, \* *No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*. No man can claim the honour of officiating as a Minister in the Church of Christ, who is not *called and sent to execute* that office by an *outward commission* in like manner as *Aaron* was. And how dreadful and displeasing it is to Almighty God, for an inferiour Minister to assume any part of the ministerial office, which he is not *outwardly* commissioned to execute, † we may learn from the example of *Corah* and his company, who presuming upon their own *holiness*, and pretending that *the Lord was among them*, offered incense

\* Heb. v. 4.

† Num. xvi. 3, 32, 33.



before the Lord, which they were not *outwardly* commissioned to do; *And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Corah, and all their goods; they and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation.*

To come now to the *dire effects*, which you charge upon the opinions that I have maintained. You begin thus, "Supposing  
 " with that Gentleman, that a Clergyman  
 " is not in the *true way*, or the *true way*  
 " in him, because that he believes his com-  
 " mission runs, *preach the Gospel to every*  
 " *creature*; and thereby, contrary to the  
 " declared will of his Bishop, preaches to  
 " any who are willing to hear, wherefo-  
 " ever a door is open; must not this prove,  
 " first, that our Sister Church of *Scotland*,  
 " and all our Protestant dissenting brethren,  
 " are all to a man out of the *true way*.  
 " For did not their ancestors shake off obe-  
 " dience to the *declared will* of their Bi-  
 " shops?" My words were, *Can he then be*  
*in the true way, or the true way in him,*  
*whose every ministerial act is an invasion of*  
*the rights and functions of another, and a*  
*direct infringement of his own vows of fidelity*  
*and submission?* But you suppose your Cler-  
 gyman

gyman to preach only "to any who are willing  
 "to hear, wheresoever a door is open." And  
 are Christian people at liberty to run after  
 every preacher, who shall open a door for their  
 admission? Is no adherence due from the  
 flocks to the Pastors, who are lawfully and  
 regularly set over them? *St. Paul* \* says,  
*Obeys them that have the rule over you, and*  
*submit yourselves, for they watch for your*  
*souls.* And what right have either the in-  
 feriour Clergy, or any of the Laity, to be  
 exempt from the observance of *St. Paul's*  
 command? But does your Clergyman's con-  
 gregation really, Sir, consist only of such un-  
 steady people, "as are willing to hear, where-  
 "soever a door is open?" Have no tickets  
 been given out to appropriated followers?  
 no pews disposed of to settled members?  
 Now, Sir, to pursue the metaphor of a  
 shepherd and his flock, let us suppose a  
 neighbour of yours to set open the gate of  
 his field for the reception of such sheep,  
 as shall have strayed from your fold; and  
 when he has them in possession, let us far-  
 ther suppose him to set his mark upon  
 them, and call them his own; Would you  
 not have just cause to complain of him as  
 an invader of your property? And would  
 the plea of the sheep being willing to feed

\* Heb. xiii. 17.

wheresoever a gate was open be deemed by you to be a rational excuse? But to come closer to your objection, Why do you, Sir, as a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, call the Church of *Scotland* our Sister-Church? Has any Church-act passed on either side acknowledging the relation? Do not the two Churches disagree both in doctrine, in worship, and in discipline? Whence then arises the alliance? And here I make no scruple to declare, that I do not think myself obliged to vindicate the conduct of the *Scottish* Reformers, who not only shook off obedience to the declared will of their Bishops, but cast off Episcopacy too, which you yourself, Sir, if true to your subscription, must also disapprove. And for the same reason you must likewise condemn our dissenting brethren. For if Episcopacy be of divine *appointment*, which, as we have seen, is the doctrine of the Church of *England*, the Dissenters, who have rejected it, must be in the wrong. The two opposite terms of a contradiction cannot both be true. As to the *damnation*, which you so freely distribute, please to take notice, it is your expression, not mine. To their own judge they must stand or fall; and how far the sincerity of their intentions, and a firm adherence to the dictates of their conscience, may excuse their departure



parture from the discipline of the Church, is neither your part nor mine to determine.

Can then the *English* Reformation be defended upon the principles, which I have advanced? For, secondly, say you, " must not Mr. N. N's principles prove, " that all our pious Reformers in King " *Edward's* days, and glorious Martyrs in " *Queen Mary's*, were all out of the true " way? For did not they all knowingly, " willingly, and resolutely disobey the de- " clared will of their Bishop of *Rome*? " I answer, the Bishop of *Rome* has no jurisdiction in the realm of *England*. The power he claimed here before the Reformation was usurped and unlawful, and deservedly as such cast off. The power contended for in the Bishops of *England* is a power conferred by Christ, descending from the Apostles, exercised by the Bishops of the Primitive Church, established by the Articles, Canons, and publick Offices of the Church of *England*, subscribed to by yourself, and acknowledged at the time of your Ordination. Can you see no difference in these two cases? The Church of *Rome* was corrupt in doctrine, polluted in worship, erroneous in discipline. The Bishops of *England*, as Successors to the Apostles, and presiding over Provincial Churches,

had a just right, according to the principles I have maintained, to correct whatever was amiss in their respective districts; and as this could not be done without shaking off the Papal yoke, they in so doing discharged the duties they owed to God, and to the people committed to their charge.

Thus, Sir, have I proved, that the principles advanced in my first letter, (however stigmatized by you as *terrible, horrible, popish, uncharitable, absurd, unreasonable, antisciptural, viperous*) are both agreeable to Scripture, the tradition of the Primitive Church, and the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as taught in her Articles, Canons, and publick Offices. And if you can shew, that I have either misrepresented any one fact, or drawn any conclusion, which does not naturally follow from the premisses it is drawn from, I am ready to retract it. I think it no shame to acknowledge a mistake. At the same time I would advise you for the future to keep close to your subject, maturely to weigh the difficulty proposed, and to give a direct answer, without running out into fruitless digressions and intemperate language, which may serve indeed to amuse your reader and draw off his attention from its principal object, but can carry no conviction along with them,

them, and will never pass with the sober and judicious for reason and argument.

To conclude, You rightly observe, Sir, that nothing is more deceitful than the heart of man. Not every thing, which may seem righteous in our own eyes, is righteous in the sight of God. We are too apt to be misled by flattering appearances, and we have a powerful adversary, who lyes in wait continually to ensnare us, and whose artifice it has ever been to convey his delusions under the form of piety. When *Corab* and his company rebelled against *Aaron*, the pretence was, \* *that all the congregation were holy every one of them*. Our blessed Saviour has † assured us, that many will be rejected, by him, who shall plead, that *in his name they have done many wonderful works*. And they who disturbed the peace of the Church at *Corinth*, *St. Paul* ‡ tells us, *transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ*. Permit me therefore once more charitably to remind you of the rank you hold in the Church, and the subordinate station, wherein Providence has placed you. Reflect upon the limited nature of your office, your solemn subscription, the vow you made at your ordination, and the spirit of animosity and division which has been

\* Numb. xvi. 2. † Matt. vii. 15. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 13.



raised in the Church, by means of the unauthorized congregations, which have of late been set up. \* *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.*

I am, Sir, with great truth,

Your sincere well-wisher  
in Christ Jesus,

N. N.

